

The vibrant younger woodland at Stratton boasts a range of native broadleaf tree species, including oak, ash, field maple, goat willow, wild service tree, crab apple and hazel, while Stanton Park is classified as semi-natural ancient woodland, having been continuously wooded for at least 400 years. Stanton has some specimen trees too – look out for the imposing giant redwood beside the concrete track from the car park as well as mature oak, lime, aspen and beech. Both sites have a community orchard planted with traditional Wiltshire apples, English pears, quinces, cherries and plums. Stanton Park is host to over a thousand species of weird and wonderful fungi. The jelly ear sprouting from elder tree trunks; the white bulbs of collared earstar, which burst open into a flower-like shape, and the orange, cabbage-shaped chicken of the woods are just a few to look out for.

Fabulous flora

A rich mosaic of woodlands, wildflower meadows and parkland that's teeming with wildlife – right on Swindon's doorstep. Together, these two sites provide a tranquil respite from the busy town and a chance to get in touch with nature. **Stratton Wood**, owned by the Woodland Trust, was planted on former arable land in 1995 and 1996 with the help of local volunteers as part of the Great Western Community Forest Project. It has now matured into 54 hectares of native broadleaf woodland, meadows and seasonal ponds. The adjacent **Stanton Park**, owned by Swindon Borough Council, offers 74 hectares of unspoiled, 19th century landscaped parkland, lush pasture dotted with majestic trees, areas of ancient woodland and an expansive lake with a resident family of swans. Explore the park's many wildlife ponds and its charming stream – Bydell Mill Brook.

Neighbours in nature

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Stratton Wood and Stanton Park



WOODLAND TRUST



SWINDON BOROUGH COUNCIL



Stanton Park was once the site of a Roman villa. Although there's no visible evidence today, digs have revealed the remains of a bath house and mosaic pavements dating from around 200 AD. Railway enthusiasts may also be interested to know that the old Swindon to Highworth railway ran along the park's western boundary, now used as a path. The bridge abutments can still be seen today.

Hidden history

Stratton Wood is the largest of 12 sites making up the Great Western Community Forest Project, which involves local people and organisations working together to improve the environment. In total, the sites cover 168 square miles, stretching from Royal Wootton Bassett to Faringdon, and from the North Wessex Downs to the Thames.



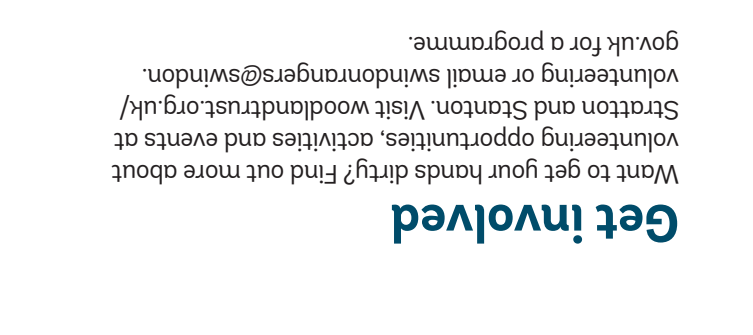
The Great Western Community Forest



Robin



Jelly ear



Bug hunt

Get involved

Want to get your hands dirty? Find out more about volunteering opportunities, activities and events at Stratton and Stanton. Visit woodlandtrust.org.uk/ or email swindonrangers@swindon.gov.uk for a programme.

A wealth of wildlife

Stratton Wood and Stanton Park are brimming with birdlife. Keep an eye out for chattering flocks of long-tailed tits, the yellow flash of goldfinch wings, and bold robins eyeing you curiously. Look up and you may catch sight of a buzzard, kestrel or red kite soaring on thermals high above the clearings. In early spring you can often hear the distinctive drumming of woodpeckers on hollow branches.

Stratton's wildflower meadows are home to skylarks and they can often be seen rising vertically from the grasslands and hovering in their melodic song flight. They're ground-nesting birds so please keep to paths so you don't disturb them. In spring and summer, the meadows' many wild flowers provide a nectar feast for bees and colourful butterflies – 26 different species have been recorded here, including our tiniest butterfly, the small blue, which is rare in this part of Wiltshire. Observant visitors may also spot the ball-shaped woven nests of harvest mice clinging to long plant stalks.



Great spotted woodpecker



Small blue butterfly

Getting there

By bus: The Stagecoach number 10 bus stops at Kingsdown Arkells Brewery, a 15-minute walk away. From the bus stop, head north-east along Kingsdown Road, going over the A419 to Stratton Wood on the left. For up-to-date travel information, contact Traveline on 0871 200 2233 or visit traveline.info.

By car: From central Swindon, take the A4312 (Drake's Way). At the roundabout, take the B4006. At the crossroads with the Arkells Brewery, turn right onto the B4141 (Kingsdown Road) and cross over the A419. The car park for Stratton Wood is on the left, about 150m after the A419 bridge. For Stanton Park, continue along Kingsdown Road, and at the roundabout take the A361 (Highworth Road). After about 700m, turn left into The Avenue and left again after 400m for the car park. Sat Nav: Stanton Park, The Avenue, SN6 7SF.



Do you love trees?

Help us protect native woodland and its wildlife, find more wonderful woods to explore and get inspiring ideas for woodland adventures when you visit woodlandtrust.org.uk or call 0330 333 3300.

- ✓ The Woodland Trust, Kempton Way, Grantham, Lincolnshire. NG31 6LL
0330 333 3300
woodlandtrust.org.uk
- ✓ The Swindon Ranger Team, Coate Water Ranger Centre, Marlborough Rd, Swindon. SN3 6AA
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Stratton Wood and Stanton Park

Let's walk

Explore across both sites on the extensive network of marked trails. There are walks to suit all ages and abilities, and so much to discover.

Footprint Trail

(2 hours) This 3.3 mile stroll takes in all the highlights across the two sites: mature woodlands, wildflower meadows, community orchards, the lake and visitor centre at Stanton Park.

Leaf Trail, Stratton

(15 mins) This short 0.7 mile circular walk on a surfaced path gives a taste of Stratton's lovely woodland – perfect for little legs and buggies.

Leaf Trail, Stanton

(35 mins) This 1 mile walk takes you through Stanton's Great Wood and along Kingsdown Lane, a long established green lane flanked by trees and hedgerows. Not suitable for pushchairs.

Minibeast Trail, Stratton

(45 mins) A longer walk of 1.8 miles which skirts Stratton Wood's wildflower meadows, providing a visual feast in spring and summer, and plenty of opportunities for wildlife spotting.

Minibeast Trail, Stanton

(30 mins) A 1 mile walk along surfaced paths through woodland, mature parkland, reed beds and ponds, offering stunning vistas across the lake, open parkland and grazed meadows.

- ● ● Footprint trail
- ● ● Leaf trail
- ● ● Minibeast trail
- ● ● Other trails

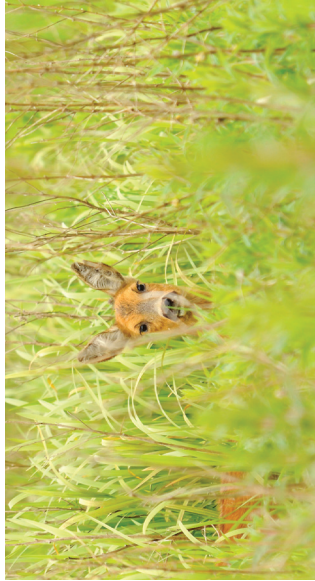


Car park



Toilets and tea room

(Open 10.30am - 4.30pm every Sat and Sun, Easter to Sept, and Sun only Sept to Easter.)



Walk quietly through the woodlands and you may come across a shy roe deer peering through the meadow grass or trees.



Ox-eye daisies, meadow crane's-bill, clover and pyramidal orchids produce a riot of colour in summer.



In spring, cowslips and buttercups bring swathes of sunshine yellow to Stratton Wood's two wildflower meadows.



Pipistrelle bat

As sunset nears, watch out for bats darting over the water of Stanton Lake as they begin their nocturnal insect hunt.

